

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 ARA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2901

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03227

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, PDEV, UNGA, RQ

SUBJECT: PUERTO RICO: ETHIOPIAN PERMREP'S COMMENTS

1. POLMIN APPROACHED ETHIOPIAN PERMREP HAMID AUGUST 17  
TO ASK HIS CURRENT POSITION ON THE PUERTO RICO ISSUE IN  
THE COMMITTEE OF 24.

2. HAMID SAID THAT AS LONG AGO AS LAST YEAR'S MEETING HE  
HAD OF COURSE ANTICIPATED THAT THIS ISSUE MUST AGAIN BE  
FACED. HE CONSEQUENTLY SENT HIS MINISTRY AN OPTIONS  
PAPER AT THAT TIME ANTICIPATING THE VOTING DILEMMA THAT  
WOULD CONFRONT ETHIOPIA IN 1978. HIS MESSAGE STIMULATED  
THE FOREIGN OFFICE IN ADDIS TO CONDUCT A SERIES OF  
THOROUGH DISCUSSIONS OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS ISSUE  
FOR ETHIOPIA, INCLUDING THE RELEVANCE OF THE ERITREAN  
PROBLEM, ETHIOPIA'S NEWLY DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIP WITH  
CUBA AND THE SOVIET UNION, AND THE MERITS OF THE FACTUAL  
SITUATION PERTAINING TO PUERTO RICO-US RELATIONS.

3.,HE SAID INSTRUCTIONS FOR ETHIOPIA'S VOTE IN 1977 WERE  
SO.CLOSELY HELD THAT HE HIMSELF WAS NOT TOLD HOW  
ETHIOPIA WOULD VOTE UNTIL THE DAY BEFORE THE ACTUAL VOTE.  
HE WAS INSTRUCTED NOT TO INFORM THE CUBANS AND THEIR  
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ALLIES UNTIL HE WALKED INTO THE COMMITTEE ROOM FOR THE  
VOTE. WHEN HE TOLD THE CUBAN REP OF HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO  
VOTE AGAINST THE CUBAN POSITION, HE WARNED THE CUBAN THAT  
THERE WOULD BE NO DISCUSSION UNTIL AFTERWARD. HAMID SAID  
THE CUBAN WAS CALM AND RESIGNED.

4. AS THE DISCUSSION WITHIN THE COMMITTEE EVOLVED THIS

YEAR, HAMID AGAIN ASKED THE MINISTRY FOR SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS ON HIS VOTE. HE HAS YET RECEIVED NO INSTRUCTIONS AND DOES NOT EXPECT THEM UNTIL A DAY OR SO BEFORE THE VOTE IS SCHEDULED. HE NOTED THAT IT IS HIGHLY UNUSUAL FOR AN ETHIOPIAN REP TO ASK FOR SUCH SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS, BECAUSE THE ETHIOPIAN PRACTICE GENERALLY IS TO PERMIT REPS TO VOTE ON THE BASIS OF VERY GENERAL POLICY INSTRUCTIONS. HAMID INSISTED UPON ASKING AGAIN FOR INSTRUCTIONS BECAUSE OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF THIS ISSUE FROM THE ETHIOPIAN POINT OF VIEW AND BECAUSE OF HIS OWN PERSONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE AMERICAN CASE.

5. HAMID URGED, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THAT WE MAINTAIN CONSTANT PRESSURE ON THE FOREIGN OFFICE IN ADDIS TO INFLUENCE THE INSTRUCTIONS HE IS EXPECTING. HE INFERRED THAT THE REQUIREMENTS OF BLOC ASSOCIATIONS THIS YEAR ARE LIKELY TO SHIFT ETHIOPIA'S VOTE IN THE CUBAN DIRECTION UNLESS WE CAN BRING TO BEAR EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS IN ADDIS. HE DECLINED TO COMMIT HIMSELF TO REPORT OUR APPROACH AND THE ARGUMENTATION LAID OUT BY THE POLMIN ON GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE FOR HIM TO APPEAR TO BE ARGUING THE US CASE AT A TIME WHEN THE MINISTRY PRESUMABLY IS DEBATING ITS INSTRUCTIONS. HE ALSO NOTED THAT HIS PERSONAL STATUS IN THE MISSION IS SOMEWHAT CIRCUMSCRIBED BY THE SUSPICION THAT HIS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH US AFFAIRS MAY HAVE INFLUENCED HIS ATTITUDES.

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6. HAMID SAID THE ERITREAN ARGUMENT IS A FAIR ONE AND HAS HISTORICAL RELEVANCE IN ETHIOPIAN THINKING. HE BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT THE MORE EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS RELATE TO AN EFFORT TO DEMONSTRATE OUR GOOD, FAIR AND NON-COLONIAL PURPOSE IN PUERTO RICO. HE MENTIONED THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT OF JULY 25, THE FREEDOM OF PUERTO RICAN REPS TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE, HIS KNOWLEDGE THAT THE US GOVERNMENT DOES NOT EVEN HAVE A CENTRAL OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR PUERTO RICAN AFFAIRS BELOW THE WHITE HOUSE, AND THE HISTORY OF VOTES AND EXPRESSIONS OF ATTITUDE IN PUERTO RICO WHICH TO HAMID DEMONSTRATES CLEARLY THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE PREFER SOME FORM OF ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE ADDED THAT ANY ANALYSIS OF THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IN PUERTO RICO, SHOWING THAT MUCH OF THE CURRENT AGITATION BY VARIOUS PARTIES HAS A PURELY TACTICAL AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL MOTIVATION, WOULD TEND TO SUPPORT OUR CASE. LEONARD

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** COMMITTEE MEETINGS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, SELFDETERMINATION  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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